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bath like this—we had never seen him take one before—seemed to prove the point.

Between the sandstone of the high plateau and the usual granite of this region there was here an unexpected intermediary layer white with kaolin. After another hour of hard going we once more found ourselves in the lush vegetation of the lowlands. To the left of the track at one point, in a cavity formed by the collapse of a big tree whose roots had been torn out of the earth, we found the light baggage carried here and stowed the day before. It was apparently unharmed, even if literally covered with a revolting army of termites. We had the packs taken out of the hole (with the greatest caution for fear of a hidden snake), piled them all up together and covered them with palm leaves—because now the Indians didn't seem to be in any hurry to cover more mileage that day, nor did they lift a finger to start putting up the usual shelter for the night.

The baggage was untouched: the possibility of seeing our expedition through to the end was therefore open to us once more. Such a satisfactory state of affairs filled us with enthusiasm, and we decided to sacrifice no less than four tins of corned beef. We shared it out among the porters. This extra meal put some heart into the Indians, and picking up their machetes again they beckoned us to follow them along the track once more, where it veered to the south, through the forest. We could make out from their gestures that we were close to the heart of the great mystery now, and so took plenty of ammunition with us in case we should need it. The gradient stiffened. The track turned to the right, into a thick maze of wild banana and thorny iriartease, and then through a little swamp where there were numerous prints of bare feet, to end up in front of a stockade of thorny palm, freshly piled up for some defensive purpose.

A sweet, heavy smell hung in the air—the typical smell of an Indian camp after it has been abandoned for a few days, which comes from rotting remains of meat and game, and decaying vegetable matter. The barrier of thorny palm was an insuperable obstacle for bare Indian feet. We followed it along to the right till we found a break, half hidden by a few tree-trunks, which led us inside the camp. At first sight it seemed no different from the usual Samaeari pattern. Here and there—all over the place, in fact—were piles of ashes and vegetable refuse of all kinds. But this encampment had one particular feature which, although the conscious part of our minds missed it at first, made us feel